



MALDIVES

Sixth Committee of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Item 107 – Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism

Statement by:
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Mr Chairman,

At the outset, let me offer you my warm congratulations on your election and that of your bureau. Allow me to also express the confidence of my delegation in your able stewardship in leading this committee through the successful conclusion of its deliberations.

Let me also thank the Secretary-General for the reports submitted under this agenda item, and welcome the recommendations contained therein.

Mr Chairman,

Almost on a daily basis, people around the world go through severe pain and suffering due to acts of terrorism. It takes innocent lives, impairs the dignity of human beings, destabilises societies and threatens territorial integrity and the security of States. My delegation joins others in condemning all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomsoever they are committed. The Maldives believes that terrorism should not be associated with any religion or culture.

In the recent past, terrorism has increased in volume and severity, and its tentacles have spread wide across the globe indiscriminately. This horror has moved into uncharted territories and in unpredictable directions. Terrorism coupled with fanaticism and extremism poses a greater threat to the world than ever before.

That is why the international community must stand together to defeat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We have to formulate decisive actions to defeat these extremist ideologies.

As a country where Islam has dominated its social fabric, societal values and culture, the Maldives can confidently assert that the so-called Islamic State and other such terrorist organisations are not only un-Islamic, but are in fact anti-Islamic. They are not religious groups, but rather terrorist organizations.

Islam is a great religion of peace, compassion, and tolerance. We will not allow radicals and extremists to hijack our faith, to perpetuate hatred and violence in its name. The Maldives delegation condemns in the strongest terms, these groups, their ideologies and their activities.

Mr Chairman,

The Maldives firmly believes that a way forward is through a renewed focus on the application and implementation of universal instruments. Terrorism can only be addressed by complementing international activities with regional, bilateral and national initiatives. Although the current counter-terrorism measures are encouraging, we believe that these measures need to be streamlined and defined.

This is why the Maldives supports the creation of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The Maldives hopes that the actual work of drafting this convention would see will come to fruition during the current session of the General Assembly, as stipulated in resolution 68/119. Therefore, we extend our full cooperation to the working group envisaged by this resolution, and we support their mandate to finalize the resolution on a convention and to decide on convening a high-level conference on this issue.

Additionally, the Maldives welcomes initiatives that emphasize the global will to jointly address the issue of foreign fighters, including UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 and 2178 (2014). These initiatives form a global strategy that acknowledges the fundamental hazards posed by foreign fighters and takes measures to address those challenges.

Mr Chairman,

At the regional level, the Maldives is working through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) for capacity building and technical cooperation. The Maldives is also a member of the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a regional Financial Action Taskforce committed to reducing the operational capacity of organized crime syndicates. Bilaterally, the Maldives cooperates closely with neighbouring countries and many other strategic partners in the conduct of exercise and training to combating terrorism. Nationally, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1990 and the more recent National Security Policy of 2012 guides the country's efforts on rooting out extremist ideologies, monitoring threats, and prosecuting offenders. The Office for Counter Terrorism works closely in sync with other Government offices in conducting inter-agency training programs for both policy makers and operational level staff. However, in order to respond to new and emerging threats, a new Anti-Terrorism Bill is currently being formulated. It is our hope that this bill along with other measures would help the Maldives more effectively target and prosecute those who espouse terrorist ideologies and actions.

Mr Chairman,

Terrorism is not an isolated phenomenon. It is a product of the linkages between fundamental and cultural antagonisms. It is the product domestic and international politics, of national and international conflicts that go beyond our national boundaries. Therefore, the Maldives is also worried about the spill over effects of conflicts, civil wars and threats within the region and around the globe.

In discussing the root causes, it is imperative that terrorism is viewed in the context of radicalisation and extremism. That it is viewed through the context of social discrimination, economic disparity, restrictions on rights and civil liberties and unscrupulous power politics. More than merely addressing the crime of terrorism, we must address root causes of terrorism, such as poverty, destitution, unemployment, civil unrest and the lack of education.

Mr Chairman,

Terrorism is a multi-faceted phenomenon. No country can deal with the phenomena on its own. For a country like the Maldives, with a vast geographical area to monitor, international assistance and coordination is of paramount importance. The Maldives recognises counter-radicalisation efforts as the key to long-term success against violent extremism. We also believe that this fight is collective and global and we reiterate our unequivocal support for the fulfilment of pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and look forward to working with partner nations to make this strategy a reality.

Thank you.